THE DOOM PATROL!
8
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ERIK LARSEN and ARTHUR ADAMS

WHEW! WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS, CHARLIE. SOLID BRICK... ALL CHOPPED UP. EVER SEE A FRAGMENTATION GRENADE IN ACTION?
YEAH, I TOSSED A FEW IN THE MARINES. YOU TELLING ME SOME GUY DID THIS---?
...SO WE TRIED MAKING A GRAB FOR HIM, BUT SHRAPNEL ACTED LIKE SOMEONE WITH PLACES TO GO-- BUT FAST! TAKE IT FROM SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE, LT. MITCHELL... SHRAPNEL'S NOT A GUY YOU WANNA MEET AT NIGHT IN A DARK ALLEY.
WE ALREADY KNEW THAT, MISS. THAT MANIAC'S CHOPPED UP NINE PEOPLE SINCE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON... HE'S CRAZY AND DEADLY, AND WORSE, ON THE LOOSE!
YAH GOT THE DOOM PATROL TO HELP SNAG HIM IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, LIEUTENANT.
G-3490
THE MORNING AFTER
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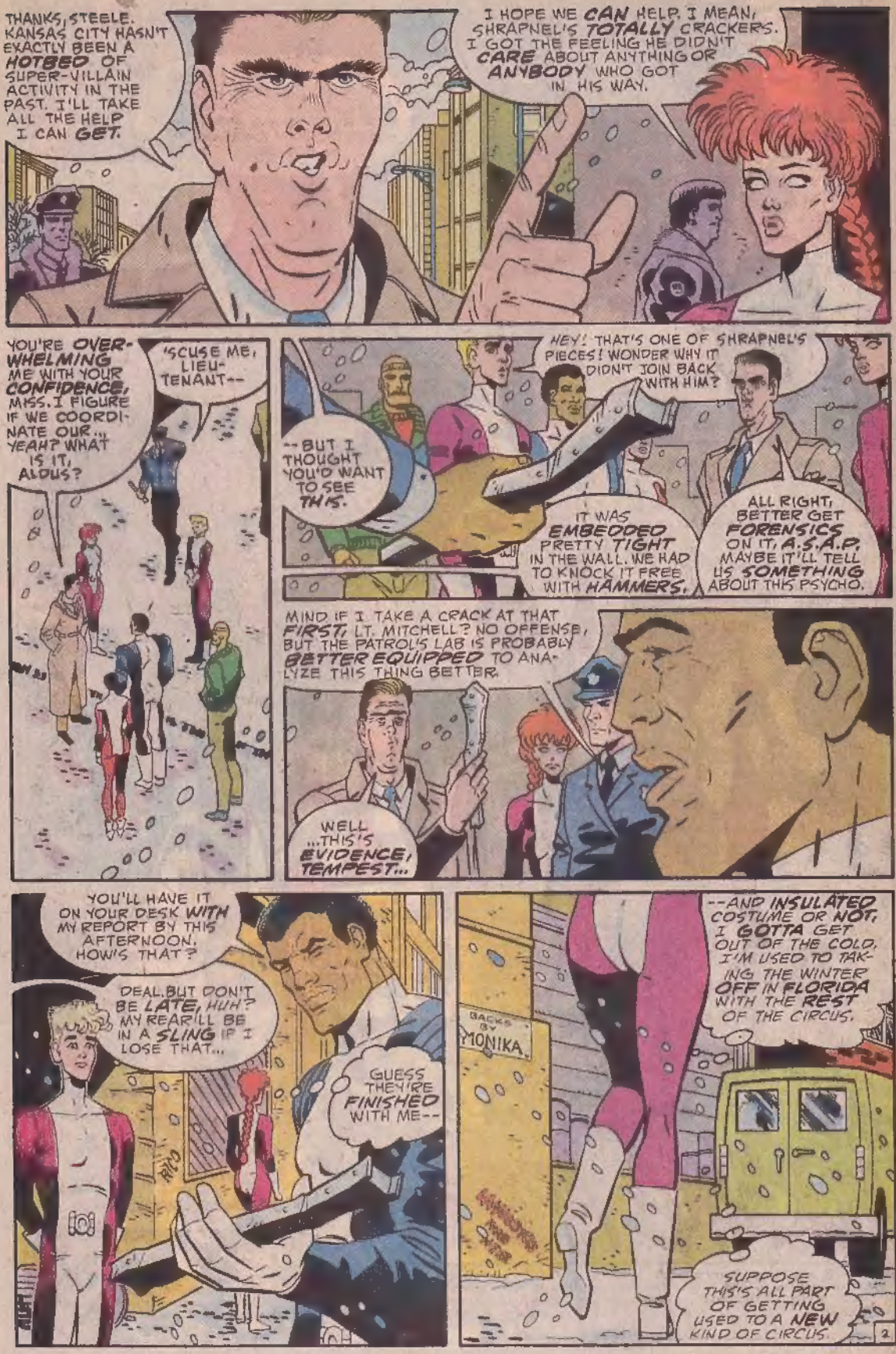
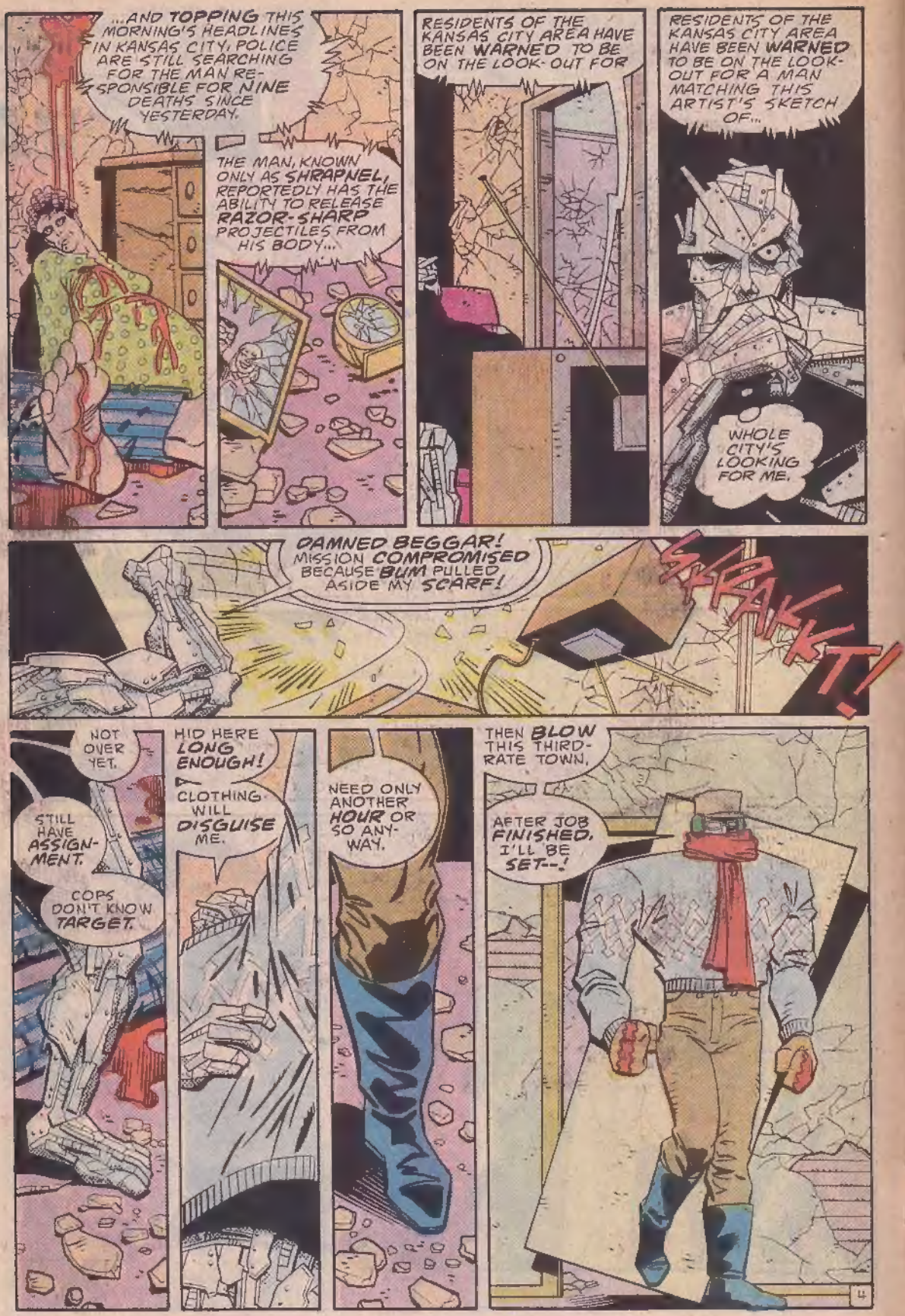

THANKS, STEELE. KANSAS CITY HASN'T EXACTLY BEEN A HOTBED OF SUPER-VILLAIN ACTIVITY IN THE PAST. I'LL TAKE ALL THE HELP I CAN GET.
I HOPE WE CAN HELP. I MEAN, SHRAPNEL'S TOTALLY CRACKERS. I GOT THE FEELING HE DIDN'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING OR ANYBODY WHO GOT IN HIS WAY.
YOU'RE OVER-WHELMING ME WITH YOUR CONFIDENCE, MISS. I FIGURE IF WE COORDI-NATE OUR...
'SCUSE ME, LIEU-TENANT--
YEAH? WHAT IS IT, ALDUS?
HEY! THAT'S ONE OF SHRAPNEL'S PIECES! WONDER WHY IT DIDN'T JOIN BACK WITH HIM?
--BUT I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO SEE THIS.
IT WAS EMBEDDED PRETTY TIGHT IN THE WALL. WE HAD TO KNOCK IT FREE WITH HAMMERS.
ALL RIGHT, BETTER GET FORENSICS ON IT, A.S.A.P. MAYBE IT'LL TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PSYCHO.
MIND IF I TAKE A CRACK AT THAT FIRST, LT. MITCHELL? NO OFFENSE, BUT THE PATROL'S LAB IS PROBABLY BETTER EQUIPPED TO ANA-LYZE THIS THING BETTER.
WELL ...THIS'S EVIDENCE, TEMPEST...
YOU'LL HAVE IT ON YOUR DESK WITH MY REPORT BY THIS AFTERNOON. HOW'S THAT?
DEAL. BUT DON'T BE LATE, HUH? MY REAR'LL BE IN A SLING IF I LOSE THAT...
GUESS THEY'RE FINISHED WITH ME--
BACKS BY MONIKA
--AND INSULATED COSTUME OR NOT, I GOTTA GET OUT OF THE COLD. I'M USED TO TAK-ING THE WINTER OFF IN FLORIDA WITH THE REST OF THE CIRCUS.
SUPPOSE THIS'S ALL PART OF GETTING USED TO A NEW KIND OF CIRCUS.
2

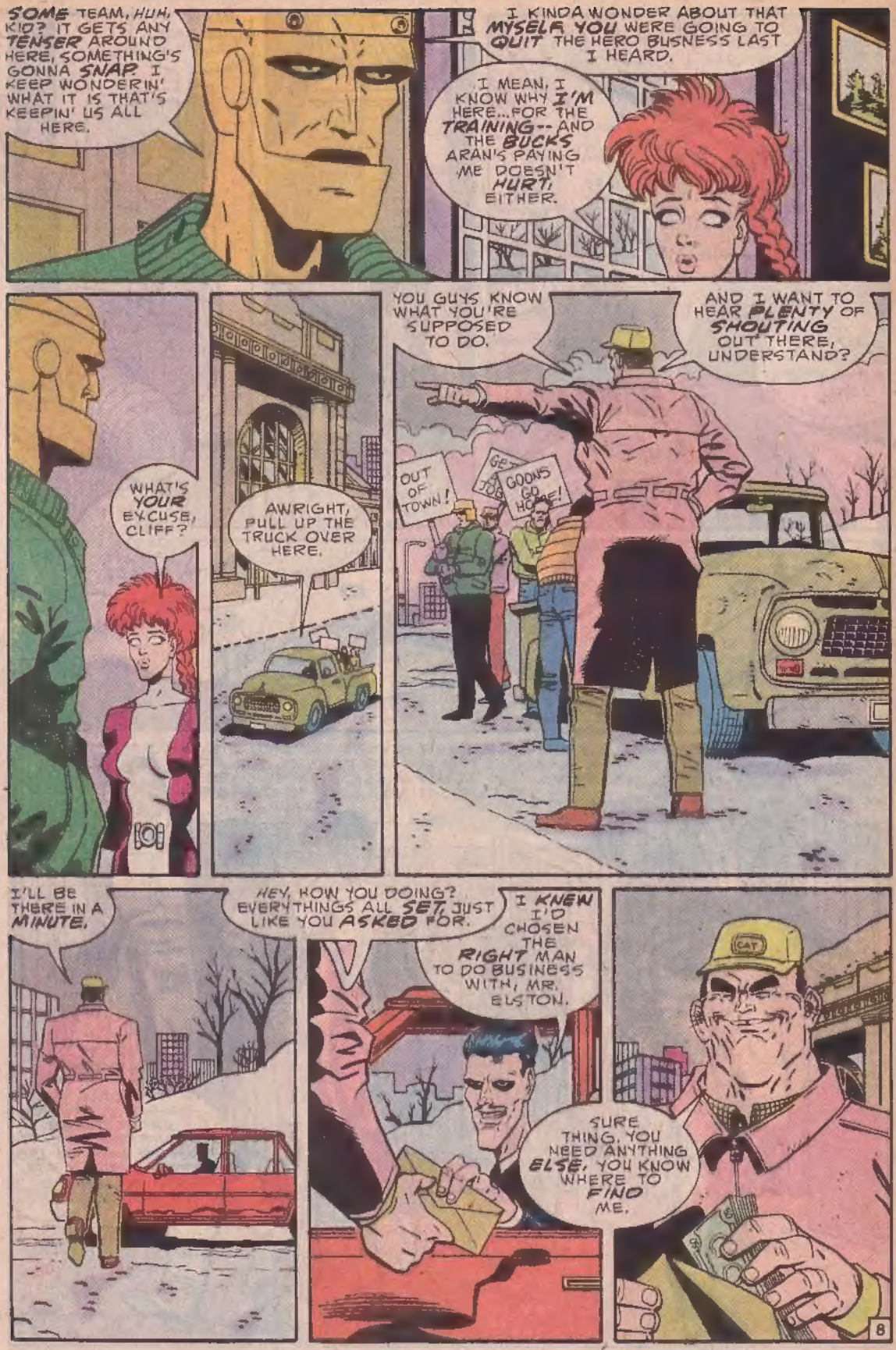
FUNNY THING IS, MUCH AS I LOVE THE CARNY LIFE, I DON'T REALLY MISS IT. I GUESS EVEN THE CIRCUS GETS TO BE A ROUTINE AFTER A WHILE.
HEY, HAWKINS, YOU STILL IN THERE?
WHERE ELSE AM I GONNA BE? SO, THEY FINISHED OUT THERE OR WHAT? I WANNA GET HOME.
ALMOST. YOU SHOULD'VE TALKED TO THEM, TOO, WAYNE...
...BUT I GUESS AFTER BEING CHASED BY THE COPS LAST NIGHT, YOU WANNA STAY OUT OF THEIR SIGHT, HUH?*
*LAST ISSUE --BOB
WHA...?! THAT--? NAW, THAT WAS A MISUNDERSTANDIN', MAN. FORGET ABOUT IT!
COME ON, WAYNE. TALK TO ME. I HAVEN'T TOLD ARANI ABOUT IT YET, BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE TO IF...
HEY, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? I... I WASN'T WATCHIN' WHERE I WAS WALKING AND BUMPED INTO THOSE COPS.
I FLIPPED OFF AT ONE'A THEM AND THEY STARTED CHASIN' AFTER ME. YOU DON'T GOTTA MENTION IT TO ANYONE. RIGHT?
SHORTLY...
I AM STILL AGAINST THIS, CLIFF. WE SHOULD ALLOW THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO HANDLE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS...
...OR THEY WILL COME TO DEPEND ON US TOO MUCH.
BULL! YOU DON'T WANNA DO THIS 'CAUSE IT TAKES YOU AWAY FROM YOUR WILD CHIEF CHASE...
...BUT SHRAPNEL'S WAY OUTTA THEIR LEAGUE, AND SINCE WE'RE GONNA LIVE IN K.C., WE MIGHT AS WELL GET IN AS GOOD AS WE CAN WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES.
EVERYBODY BELTED UP? OKAY, LET'S GET THIS BABY BACK TO HOMEBASE.
3


...AND TOPPING THIS MORNING'S HEADLINES IN KANSAS CITY, POLICE ARE STILL SEARCHING FOR THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR NINE DEATHS SINCE YESTERDAY.
THE MAN, KNOWN ONLY AS SHRAPNEL, REPORTEDLY HAS THE ABILITY TO RELEASE RAZOR-SHARP PROJECTILES FROM HIS BODY...
RESIDENTS OF THE KANSAS CITY AREA HAVE BEEN WARNED TO BE ON THE LOOK-OUT FOR
RESIDENTS OF THE KANSAS CITY AREA HAVE BEEN WARNED TO BE ON THE LOOK-OUT FOR A MAN MATCHING THIS ARTIST'S SKETCH OF...
WHOLE CITY'S LOOKING FOR ME.
DAMNED BEGGAR! MISSION COMPROMISED BECAUSE BUM PULLED ASIDE MY SCARF!
SKRAKKT!
NOT OVER YET.
STILL HAVE ASSIGNMENT.
COPS DON'T KNOW TARGET.
HID HERE LONG ENOUGH!
CLOTHING WILL DISGUISE ME.
NEED ONLY ANOTHER HOUR OR SO ANYWAY.
THEN BLOW THIS THIRD-RATE TOWN,
AFTER JOB FINISHED, I'LL BE SET--!

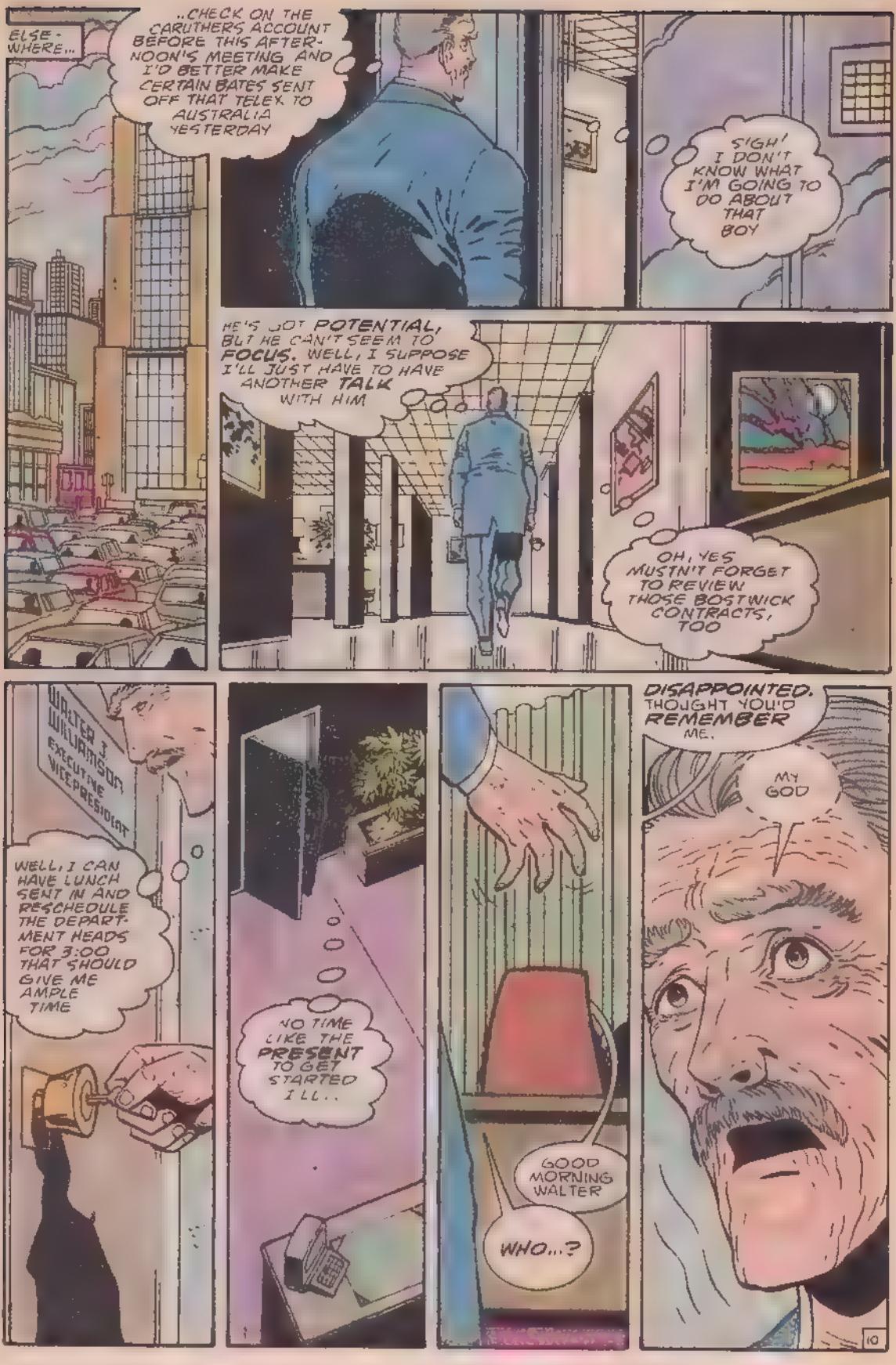
..REPRESENT A GROUP OF CONCERNED CITIZENS WHO ARE NOT AT ALL HAPPY ABOUT THE DOOM PATROL'S DECISION TO SETTLE IN OUR CITY, COUNCILMAN REYNOLDS!
ARVID E. REYNOLDS
CITY COUNCILMAN
I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THEIR CONCERN, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE EVENTS OF LAST NIGHT. IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, THE PATROL CAUSED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN PROPERTY DAMAGE--
--AND I'M CERTAIN IT WAS SHEER LUCK THAT NO ONE WAS INJURED DURING THE MELEE.
WELL, NOW, MR. BENJAMIN, THERE WAS SOME DAMAGE DONE, BUT THE DOOM PATROL WAS PROTECTING THE PEOPLE.
THAT'S A RATHER GENEROUS WAY OF LOOKING AT IT, COUNCILMAN...
...CONSIDERING THEY WOULDN'T HAVE NEEDED PROTECTION IF THE PATROL HADN'T BEEN THERE TO INSTIGATE THE BATTLE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THE CITY'S INSURANCERS ARE GOING TO STAND FOR THIS?
WELL, NOW... THAT'S CERTAINLY FOOD FOR THOUGHT... BUT WHAT'S YOUR STAKE IN THIS, MR. BENJAMIN?
COUNCILMAN, THE PEOPLE I WORK FOR...
...ARE CONCERED FOR THE SAFETY OF THIS CITY AND ITS CITIZENS.
A CONCERN WE ALL SHARE, I ASSURE YOU.
THEN PERHAPS WE MIGHT ALL WORK TOGETHER TO RID KANSAS CITY OF THIS DANGEROUS ELEMENT?
AS IT HAPPENS, SIR, I WAS THIS VERY MORNING THINKING OF INTRODUCING A BILL BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL TO ACCOMPLISH...
...THAT VERY THING...
HEH HEH
5

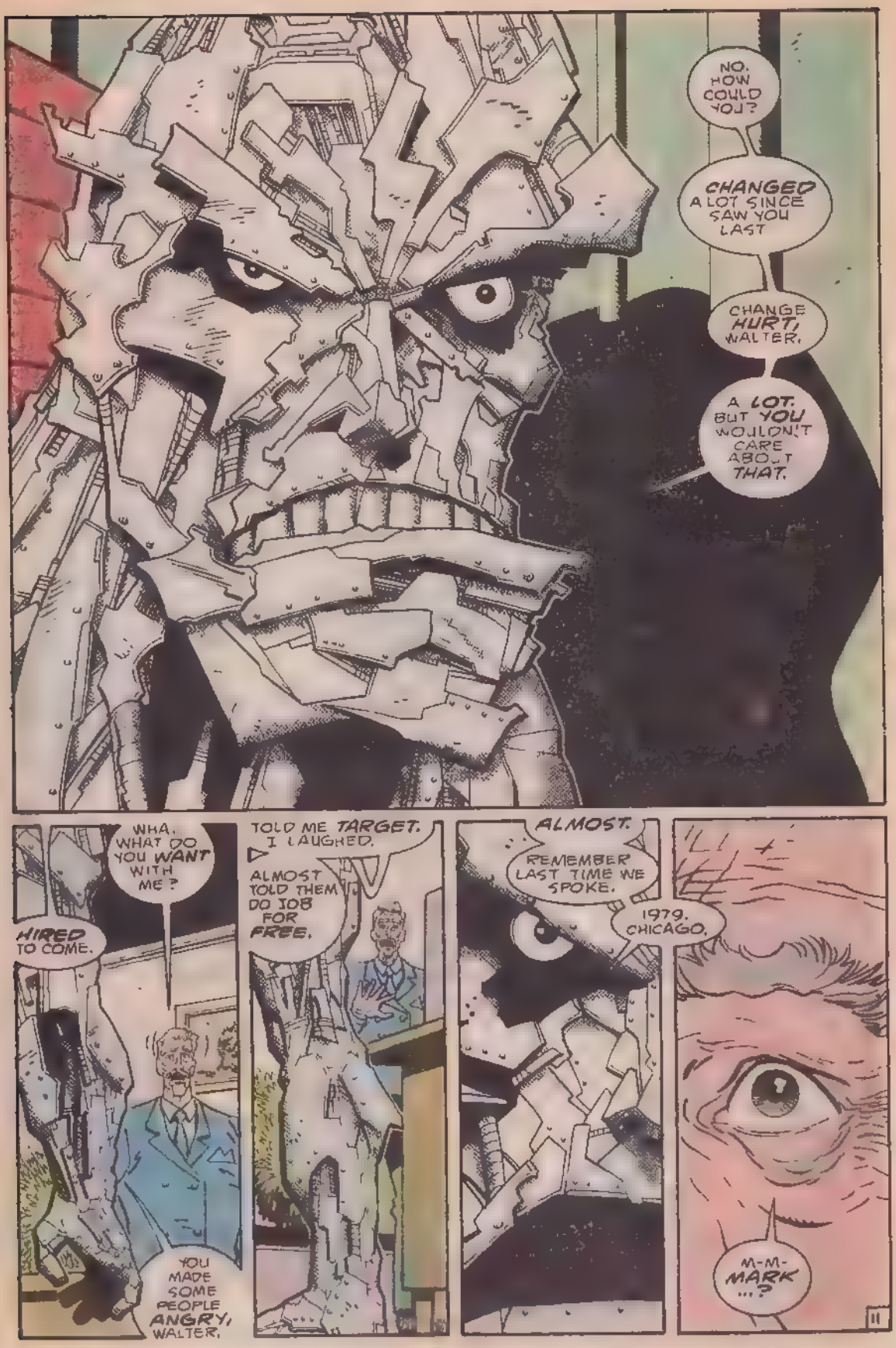
MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE CITY AT DOOM PATROL HEADQUARTERS...
HE IS HERE...AS ALWAYS, PERHAPS LARRY TRAINOR SEEKS TO AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH ME BY HIDING HIMSELF AWAY WITH THESE COMPUTERS...BUT THEN, I HAVE NOT TRIED VERY HARD TO REACH HIM MYSELF, HAVE I?
LARRY? I REALIZE I AM INTERRUPTING...
HUH... WHO--? VOSTOK! WHA... WHAT D'YOU WANT?
THE SAME AS ALWAYS. WE HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS TO DISCUSS.
AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY WE CAN SETTLE IT, VOSTOK... BY YOUR RETURNING TO ME WHAT'S RIGHTFULLY MINE!
YOU KNOW I CAN NOT DO THAT. THE RISK...
TELL ME ABOUT IT. OH, HELL, YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN TALKING. YOU JUST WANT TO HEAR ME SAY IT'S OKAY...
...RELIEVE YOUR CONSCIENCE!
WELL, IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN, LADY...! IT'S NOT OKAY, AND IT NEVER CAN BE.
I'M TRAPPED IN THESE DAMNED BANDAGES WITH NOTHING TO SHOW FOR MY SUFFERING!
AND I AM JUST SUPPOSED TO TRADE PLACES WITH YOU? YOU DIED, LARRY TRAINOR, AND I ACQUIRED YOUR CURSE.
WE ARE BOTH TRAPPED!
I DON'T CARE! LOOK AT ME...STANDING...FEELING STRONG...BECAUSE I'M NEAR YOU!
JUST BEING NEAR YOU AND THE ENERGY INVIGORATES ME! LORD! CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT DOES TO ME--?!
STOP IT, TRAINOR--
D

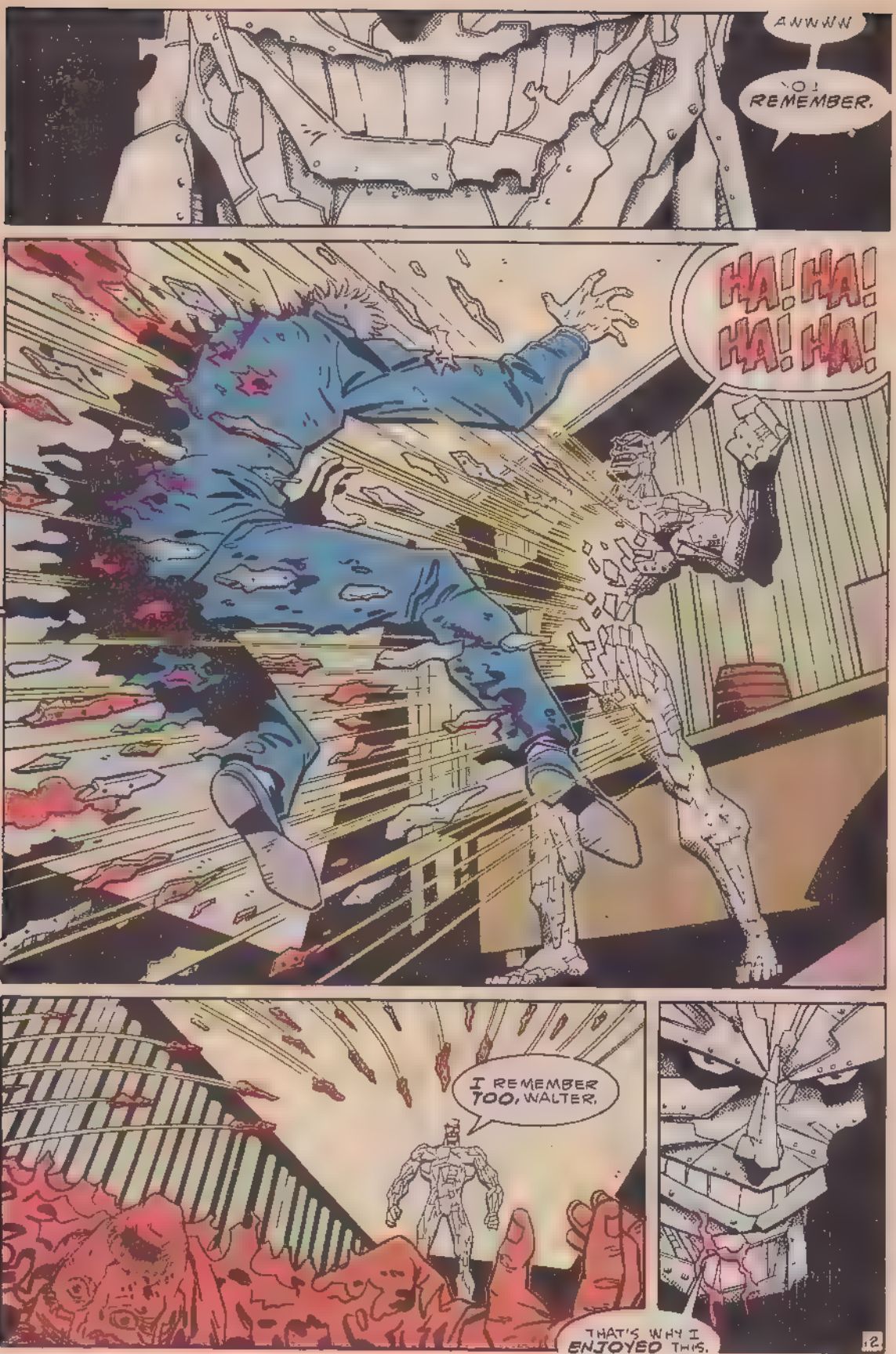
--DO NOT TOUCH ME, CURSE YOU!
NO! WAIT!
...THE ENERGY ...IT...IT WAS PULLING AT ME...
DON'T GO...I...I FELT IT...
...WANTS TO COME BACK... TO... ME...
SLAM!
...AND IT WILL! DAMN HER...IT WILL!
WELL, THAT WAS SURE A STRENUOUS SUPER-HERO EXERCISE.
I'LL BE IN MY ROOM IF ANYBODY WANTS ME.
...THIS IS OVER AND DONE WITH SO THAT WE MAY RESUME OUR PRIMARY MISSION. THESE DIVERSIONS WILL HAVE TO CEASE, JOSHUA.
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, ARANI, THESE AREN'T DIVERSIONS. THEY'RE WHAT WE DO. I'LL BE IN THE LAB. WANT TO LEND ME A HAND, SCOTT?
UH, OKAY, JOSH.


SOME TEAM, HUH, KID? IT GETS ANY TENSER AROUND HERE, SOMETHING'S GONNA SNAP. I KEEP WONDERIN' WHAT IT IS THAT'S KEEPIN' US ALL HERE.
I KINDA WONDER ABOUT THAT MYSELF. YOU WERE GOING TO QUIT THE HERO BUSNESS LAST I HEARD.
I MEAN, I KNOW WHY I'M HERE...FOR THE TRAINING--AND THE BUCKS ARAN'S PAYING ME DOESN'T HURT, EITHER.
WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE, CLIFF?
AWRIGHT, PULL UP THE TRUCK OVER HERE.
YOU GUYS KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO.
AND I WANT TO HEAR PLENTY OF SHOUTING OUT THERE, UNDERSTAND?
OUT OF TOWN!
GET THE GOONS GO HOME!
I'LL BE THERE IN A MINUTE.
HEY, HOW YOU DOING? EVERYTHINGS ALL SET, JUST LIKE YOU ASKED FOR.
I KNEW I'D CHOSEN THE RIGHT MAN TO DO BUSINESS WITH, MR. ELSTON.
SURE THING. YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME.
CAT
8

I'M SURE I'LL BE DOING JUST THAT. IN THE MEANWHILE, YOU WILL KEEP UP THE PRESSURE, WON'T YOU?
SURE THING, CHIEF.
C'MON, YOU GUYS! LET'S SHAPE IT UP OVER THERE!
DOOM PATROL OUT OF KC!
KANSAS IS FOR PEOPLE ...NOT FREAKS!
KEEP K.C. SAFE --OUTLAW THE DOOM PATROL!
GET OUT
NOT THIS TOWN
NOW YOU'RE COOKING WITH GAS, BOYS!
WELL, BIG GUY? AREN'T YOU GONNA ANSWER ME?
YEAH, SURE. WHY WOULDN'T I? SURE, I WAS PLANNIN' ON RETIRIN', BUT SOMETHIN' KINDA CAME UP.
I WOULDN'T SAY NUTS EXACTLY. SHE'S MORE... MISGUIDED. I MEAN, I DON'T KNOW IF THE CHIEF'S STILL ALIVE SOMEWHERE OR NOT ...BUT IF HE IS--
ARANI, RIGHT? YOU THINK SHE'S NUTS, DON'T YOU, CLIFF?
--HE OBVIOUSLY DON'T WANNA BE FOUND--
--OR HE WOULDA CONTACTED US BY NOW.
SO MAYBE I CAN'T STOP 'RANI FROM CHASIN' AFTER THIS DREAM O' HERS, BUT I SURE AS HELL CAN STICK AROUND AND SEE TO IT SHE DON'T GET THE REST OF YOU PEOPLE INTO ANYTHING TOO DEEP.
GEEZ! YOU'RE JUST A BIG BOY SCOUT IN A TIN SUIT, STEELE!
IT'S A DIRTY JOB, KID...
HEY! WHAT'S ALL THE SHOUTING OUT THERE?
I DUNNO. MAYBE SOMEBODY'S THROWIN' US A PARTY.
NOTHIN' WE'RE GONNA LIKE VERY MUCH, THAT'S FOR SURE, KID.
YEAH--A LYNCHING PARTY. WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON HERE...?
D.P. OUT OF K.C.
9


ELSE-WHERE...
..CHECK ON THE CARUTHERS ACCOUNT BEFORE THIS AFTER-NOON'S MEETING AND I'D BETTER MAKE CERTAIN BATES SENT OFF THAT TELEX TO AUSTRALIA YESTERDAY
SIGH! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT BOY
HE'S GOT POTENTIAL, BUT HE CAN'T SEEM TO FOCUS. WELL, I SUPPOSE I'LL JUST HAVE TO HAVE ANOTHER TALK WITH HIM
OH, YES MUSTN'T FORGET TO REVIEW THOSE BOSTWICK CONTRACTS, TOO
WALTER J WILLIAMSON EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT
WELL, I CAN HAVE LUNCH SENT IN AND RESCHEDULE THE DEPART-MENT HEADS FOR 3:00 THAT SHOULD GIVE ME AMPLE TIME
NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT TO GET STARTED I'LL..
GOOD MORNING WALTER
WHO...?
DISAPPOINTED. THOUGHT YOU'D REMEMBER ME.
MY GOD
10


NO. HOW COULD YOU?
CHANGED A LOT SINCE SAW YOU LAST
CHANGE HURT, WALTER.
A LOT. BUT YOU WOULDN'T CARE ABOUT THAT.
WHA. WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?
HIRED TO COME.
YOU MADE SOME PEOPLE ANGRY, WALTER.
TOLD ME TARGET. I LAUGHED.
ALMOST TOLD THEM DO JOB FOR FREE.
ALMOST.
REMEMBER LAST TIME WE SPOKE.
1979. CHICAGO.
M-M-MARK ...?


ANNNN
I REMEMBER.
HA! HA!
HA! HA!
I REMEMBER TOO, WALTER.
THAT'S WHY I ENJOYED THIS.
12.

I'M HERE, MR WILLIAMSON. WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA BEFORE WE GET STARTED? MR. WILLIAMSON?
SIR?
WALTER J. WILLIAMSON
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT
WALTER'S DEAD. SHUT UP!
OH, MY, EEEEEE EEEKK!
WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE HERE, MS BAILEY? WE, OH, MAN!
OUT OF WAY, GIRL!
SHOULD KILL YOU ALL...
...BUT NO MORE FREEBIES!
UHH, HNN!
MAIL DROP
OOOF FFFF!
FIRST JOB COMPLETED.
PRO-FESSIONAL NOW!
KLATTER!
13

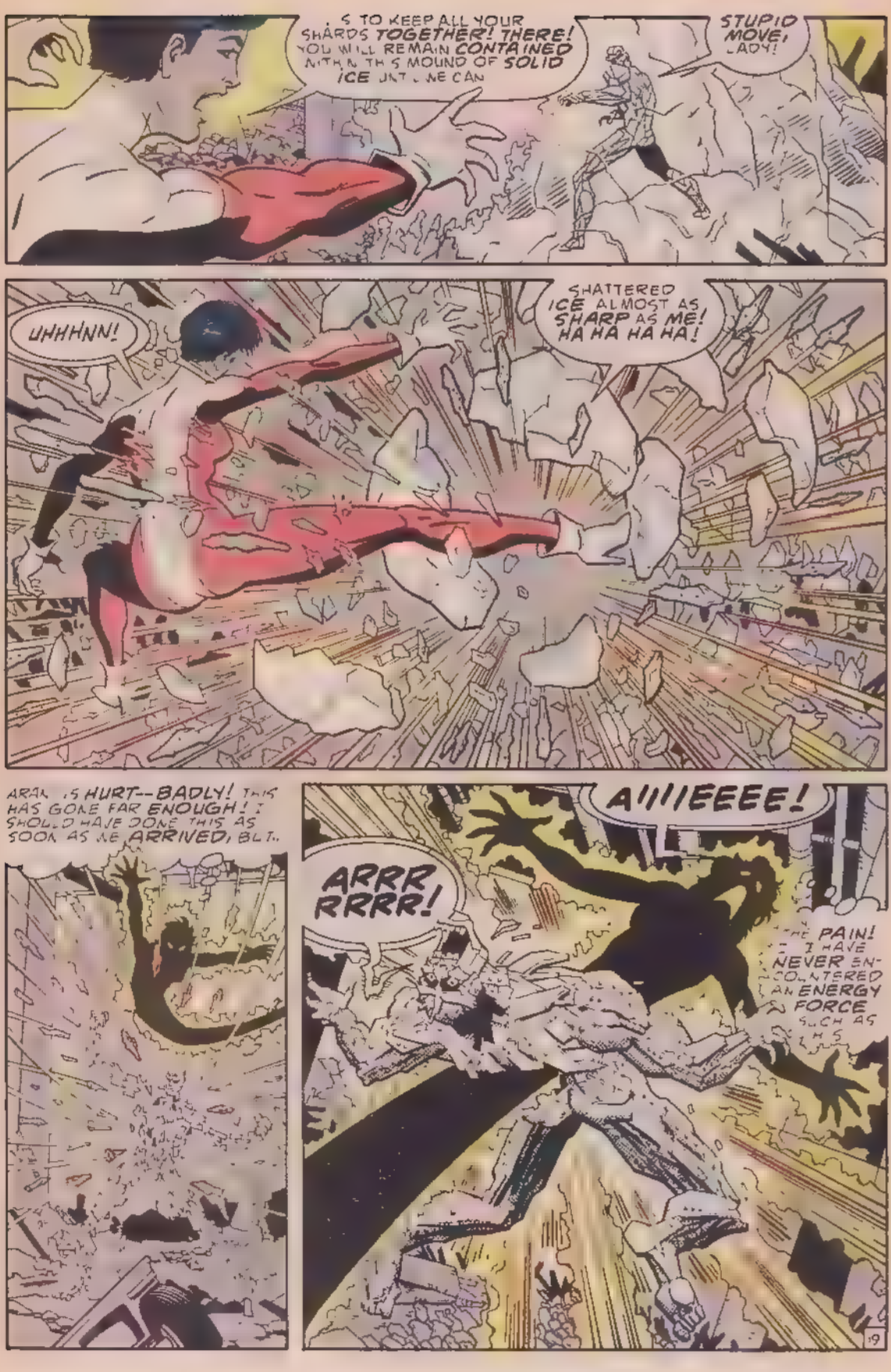
HUH? SOMEONE'S TOSSIN' GARBAGE DOWN THE MAIL-CHUTE AGAIN..? CLATTER KLANK CLATTER KRASH
1988
THUD!
MAIL
DON'T BE STUPID, KID.
AND GET OUT OF WAY!
COPS
SHOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED.
ONLY ONE THING TO DO
...SMASH MY WAY THROUGH!
ALL UNITS... WE HAVE SUSPECT SHRAPNEL... OR HE'S GOT US... WE NEED BACK-UP... EVERY-THING YOU CAN SEND!
4

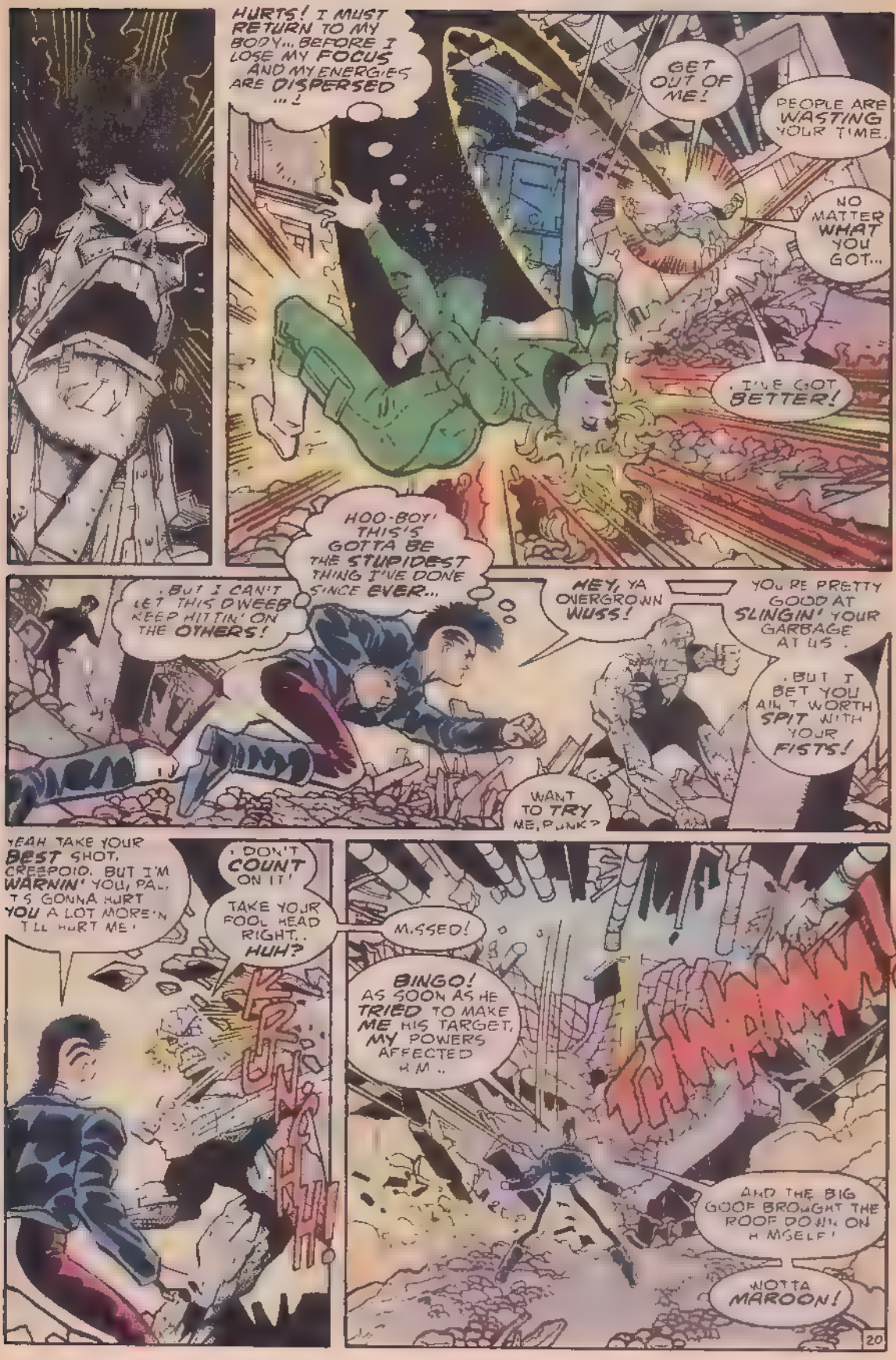
THIS THING IS ABSOLUTELY AMAZING. IT RESEMBLES A SINGLE-CELLED CREATURE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE
MY BEST GUESS IS THAT EACH OF SHRAPNEL'S SCALES ARE INDIVIDUAL ORGANISMS THAT MAKE UP A WHOLE BEING.
BUT IT'S INFINITELY MORE COMPLEX THAN THAT
THE ORGANISMS SEEM TO GAIN SUBSTANCE FROM BLOOD, AND I IMAGINE THEY REGENERATE AS HE LOSES THEM OR THEY DIE OFF.
BZZZ
BZZZ
JUST A MOMENT, JOSHUA
YES? YES, RHEA GATHER THE OTHERS. WE SHALL BE RIGHT THERE
IT IS SHRAPNEL, JOSHUA.. HE IS RUNNING RAMPANT THROUGH DOWNTOWN. THE POLICE HAVE CALLED FOR OUR ASSISTANCE.
THEN LET'S MOVE
HOW ARE WE GETTING THERE?
WE SHALL TRAVEL BY AIR, SCOTT. YOU WILL REMAIN HERE AND NOT GET IN OUR WAY
HUH? BUT BUT..
HANG IN THERE, KID. YOUR SHOT AT GLORY'LL COME
YEAH SURE THING, CLIFF.
KID LOOKS LIKE HE'S GONNA CRY.
13

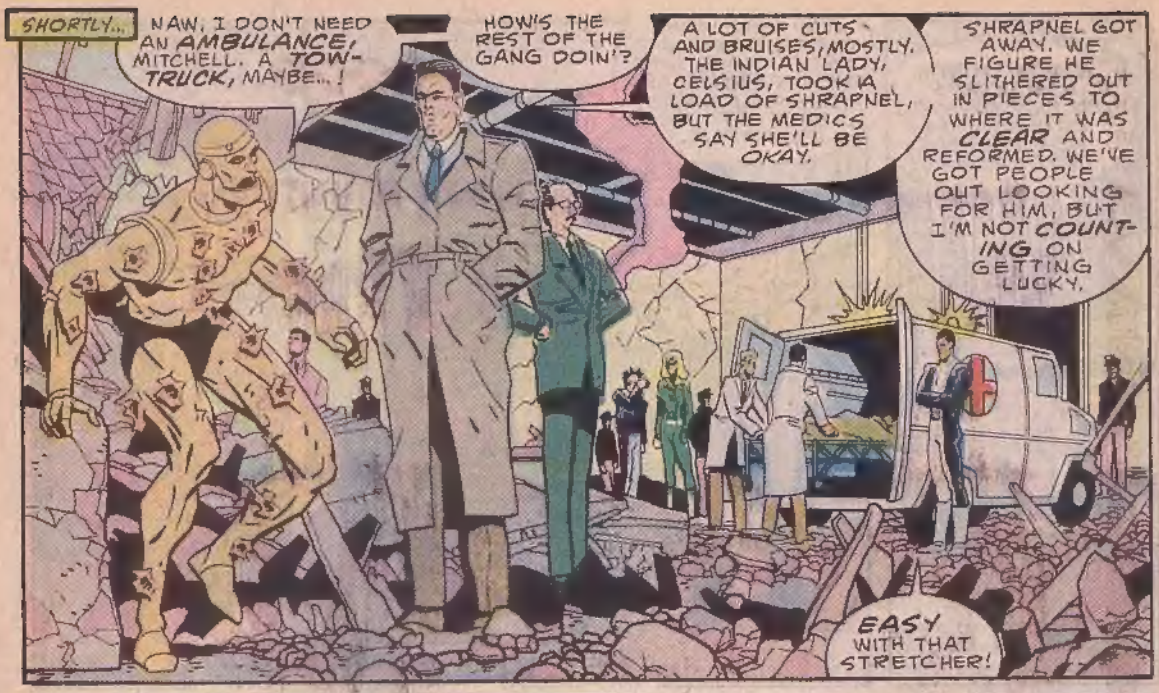
...SEE YOU LATER
BUT IT'S NOT FAIR! RHEA AND WAYNE DON'T HAVE A LOT MORE EXPERIENCE THAN ME, BUT THEY GET TO GO.
AND I'VE ALREADY BEEN IN ONE FIGHT WITH SHRAPNEL
MAYBE. MAYBE THEY JUST DON'T TRUST ME. WHY SHOULD THEY? THEY DON'T KNOW ME..
...AND I'M JUST A KID, ANYWAY...
BUT
...IT'S STILL NOT FAIR!
WHY DID THEY EVEN BOTHER ASKING ME HERE IF THEY DON'T WANT ME? THEY SHOULD'VE LEFT ME ALONE, WHERE I WAS.
NO THAT WOULDN'T'VE BEEN ANY GOOD
IT WAS WORSE THERE AT LEAST HERE, IT'S A BUNCH OF STRANGERS WHO DON'T WANT ME, AT HOME.
IT'S MY OWN PARENTS...

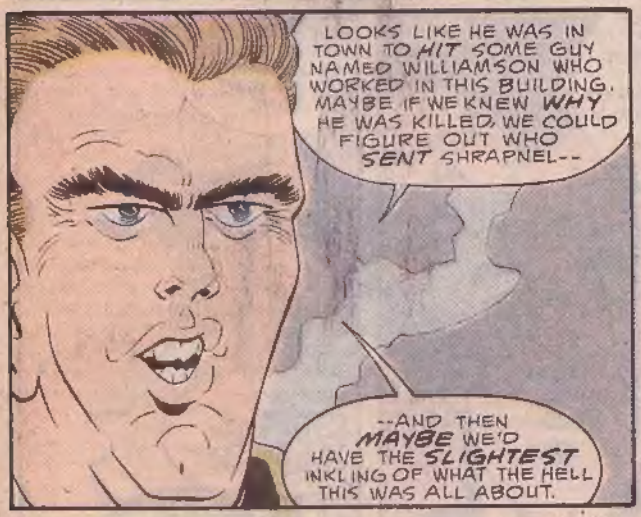
MEANWHILE
YOU'RE STUPID, COP
COULD HAVE LIVED.
SAW WHAT I CAN DO
PAY FOR YOUR STUPIDITY
YEAH IT'S TIME TO PAY UP, MAN
WHO...?
--BUT WE'RE HAND N' YOU THE B...!
HI, SCRAPPY. REMEMBER ME?
BROUGHT FRIENDS THIS TIME, GIRL?
DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY--
THIS IS NOT A JOKING MATTER RHEA! YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED SHRAPNEL'S POWER FIRST-HAND.. BEST YOU RESPECT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED
17

INCOMING, GUYS! TAKE COVE... YIKES!
WHAT THE HELL'S HAPPENING --?! MY BODY'S NOT RESPONDING LIKE IT'S SUP-POSED TO! I SHOULD'A BEEN ABLE TO DODGE THAT BLAST.
--NOBODY STOPS SHRAPNEL!
THE BOD'S EXPENDABLE BUT IF ONE O' THEM SHARDS PIERCE MY SKULL-CASING, IT'S BYE-BYE, CLIFFY!
OUCH!
I KEEP FOR-GETTING...THESE THINGS ONLY LOOK LIKE METAL, BUT THEY'RE ORGANIC...
S EVERY ONE ALL RIGHT?
I'M COOL, BUT STEELE'S BEEN TRASHED!
MAN, I KNEW THIS WAS GONNA BE USELESS!
OOOO-' I I CAUGHT A COUPLE, BUT T'S NOT TOO BAD
DON'T BE SO SURE, WAYNE WE HAVEN'T SEEN HOW HE TAKES ONE OF MY POWER BLASTS!
HA HA HA! BLAST BLOWS ME APART...
AND I'M REFORMED BEFORE SMOKE CLEARS!
THE TRICK THEN, AS I SEE IT, SHRAPNEL
18

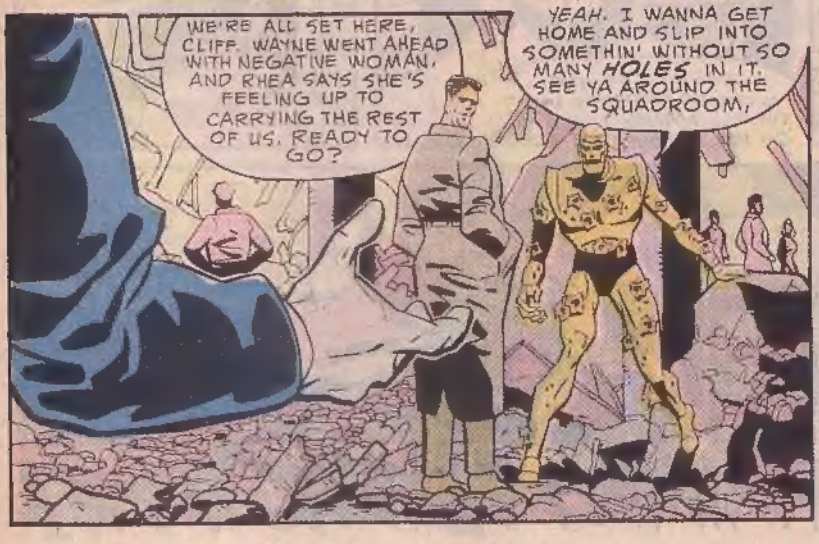

S TO KEEP ALL YOUR SHARDS TOGETHER! THERE! YOU WILL REMAIN CONTAINED WITHIN THIS MOUND OF SOLID ICE UNTIL WE CAN
STUPID MOVE, LADY!
UHHHNN!
SHATTERED ICE ALMOST AS SHARP AS ME! HA HA HA HA!
ARAN IS HURT--BADLY! THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH! I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS AS SOON AS WE ARRIVED, BUT..
AIIIEEEE!
ARRRRRR!
THE PAIN! I HAVE NEVER ENCOUNTERED AN ENERGY FORCE SUCH AS THIS
19


HURTS! I MUST RETURN TO MY BODY... BEFORE I LOSE MY FOCUS AND MY ENERGIES ARE DISPERSED ...!
GET OUT OF ME!
PEOPLE ARE WASTING YOUR TIME.
NO MATTER WHAT YOU GOT...
I'VE GOT BETTER!
HOO-BOY! THIS'S GOTTA BE THE STUPIDEST THING I'VE DONE SINCE EVER...
BUT I CAN'T LET THIS DWEEB KEEP HITTIN' ON THE OTHERS!
HEY, YA OVERGROWN WUSS!
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT SLINGIN' YOUR GARBAGE AT US.
BUT I BET YOU AIN'T WORTH SPIT WITH YOUR FISTS!
WANT TO TRY ME, PUNK?
YEAH TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT, CREEPOID. BUT I'M WARNIN' YOU, PAL, IT'S GONNA HURT YOU A LOT MORE'N IT'LL HURT ME!
I DON'T COUNT ON IT!
TAKE YOUR FOOL HEAD RIGHT, HUH?
KR-UN-CH!
M-SSED!
BINGO! AS SOON AS HE TRIED TO MAKE ME HIS TARGET, MY POWERS AFFECTED H M..
AND THE BIG GOOF BROUGHT THE ROOF DOWN ON H MSELF!
WOTTA MAROON!

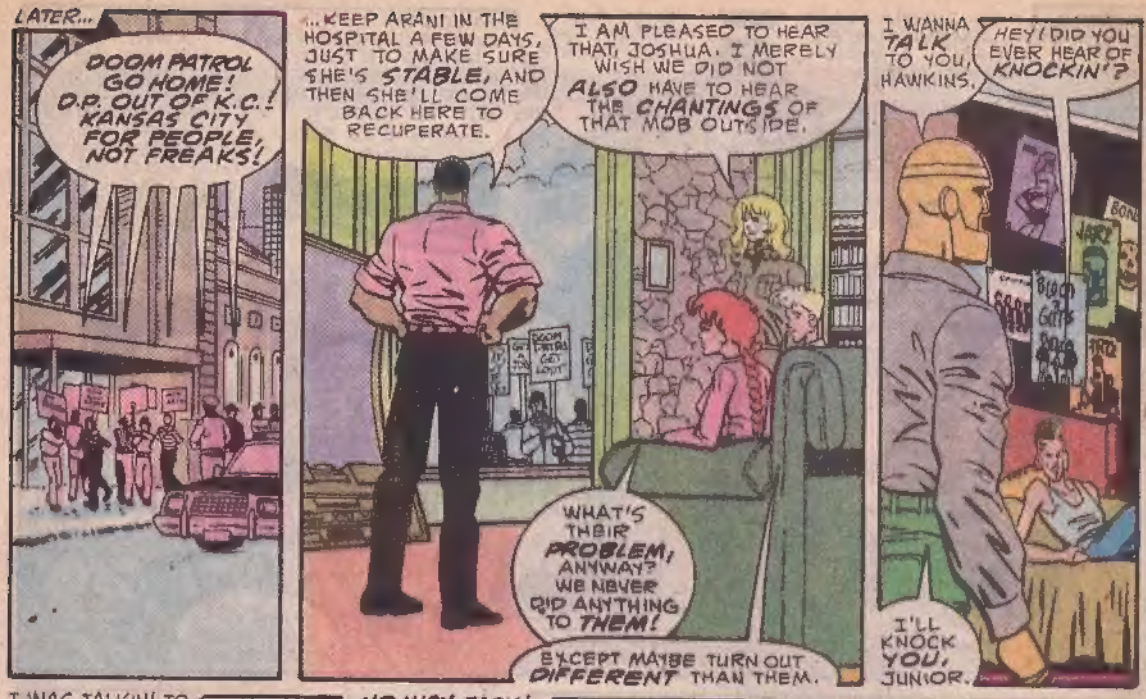

SHORTLY...
NAW, I DON'T NEED AN AMBULANCE, MITCHELL. A TOW-TRUCK, MAYBE...!
HOW'S THE REST OF THE GANG DOIN'?
A LOT OF CUTS AND BRUISES, MOSTLY. THE INDIAN LADY, CELSIUS, TOOK A LOAD OF SHRAPNEL, BUT THE MEDICS SAY SHE'LL BE OKAY.
SHRAPNEL GOT AWAY. WE FIGURE HE SLITHERED OUT IN PIECES TO WHERE IT WAS CLEAR AND REFORMED. WE'VE GOT PEOPLE OUT LOOKING FOR HIM, BUT I'M NOT COUNTING ON GETTING LUCKY.
EASY WITH THAT STRETCHER!

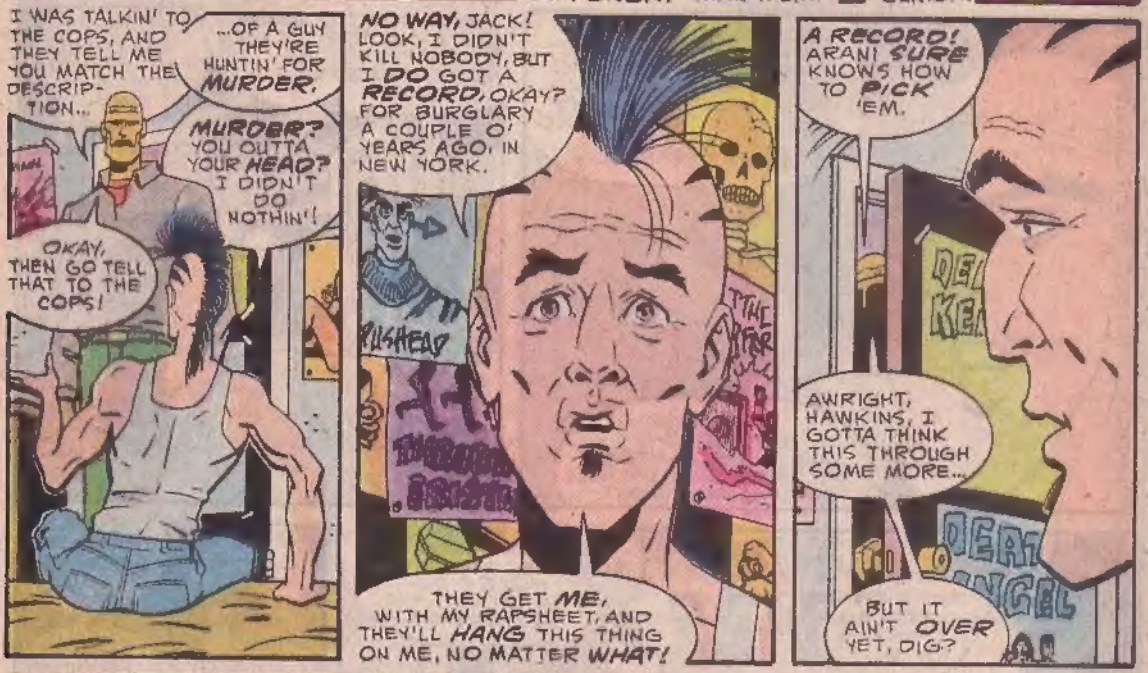

LOOKS LIKE HE WAS IN TOWN TO HIT SOME GUY NAMED WILLIAMSON WHO WORKED IN THIS BUILDING. MAYBE IF WE KNEW WHY HE WAS KILLED, WE COULD FIGURE OUT WHO SENT SHRAPNEL--
--AND THEN MAYBE WE'D HAVE THE SLIGHTEST INKLING OF WHAT THE HELL THIS WAS ALL ABOUT.

...YEAH. DON'T I LOOK LIKE A DOCTOR TO YOU, JUNIOR? JUST BE MORE CAREFUL, OKAY?
WELL, IF HE SHOWS HIS FACE AGAIN, GIVE US A RING.
COUNT ON IT, STEELE.


WE'RE ALL SET HERE, CLIFF. WAYNE WENT AHEAD WITH NEGATIVE WOMAN, AND RHEA SAYS SHE'S FEELING UP TO CARRYING THE REST OF US. READY TO GO?
YEAH. I WANNA GET HOME AND SLIP INTO SOMETHIN' WITHOUT SO MANY HOLES IN IT. SEE YA AROUND THE SQUADROOM.

UHHH, YOU GOT A SECOND, STEELE?
SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU SINCE THIS MORNING...


LATER...
DOOM PATROL GO HOME! D.P. OUT OF K.C.! KANSAS CITY FOR PEOPLE, NOT FREAKS!
...KEEP ARANI IN THE HOSPITAL A FEW DAYS, JUST TO MAKE SURE SHE'S STABLE, AND THEN SHE'LL COME BACK HERE TO RECUPERATE.
I AM PLEASED TO HEAR THAT, JOSHUA. I MERELY WISH WE DID NOT ALSO HAVE TO HEAR THE CHANTINGS OF THAT MOB OUTSIDE.
WHAT'S THEIR PROBLEM, ANYWAY? WE NEVER DID ANYTHING TO THEM!
EXCEPT MAYBE TURN OUT DIFFERENT THAN THEM.
I WANNA TALK TO YOU, HAWKINS.
HEY! DID YOU EVER HEAR OF KNOCKIN'?
I'LL KNOCK YOU, JUNIOR.


I WAS TALKIN' TO THE COPS, AND THEY TELL ME YOU MATCH THE DESCRIPTION...
...OF A GUY THEY'RE HUNTIN' FOR MURDER.
MURDER? YOU OUTTA YOUR HEAD? I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN'!
OKAY, THEN GO TELL THAT TO THE COPS!
NO WAY, JACK! LOOK, I DIDN'T KILL NOBODY, BUT I DO GOT A RECORD, OKAY? FOR BURGLARY A COUPLE O' YEARS AGO, IN NEW YORK.
THEY GET ME, WITH MY RAPSHEET, AND THEY'LL HANG THIS THING ON ME, NO MATTER WHAT!
A RECORD! ARANI SURE KNOWS HOW TO PICK 'EM.
AWRIGHT, HAWKINS, I GOTTA THINK THIS THROUGH SOME MORE...
BUT IT AIN'T OVER YET, DIG?

YEAH, I DIG, ALL RIGHT.
MAN, THIS WHOLE THING'S UNRAVELIN' FASTER'N A CHEAP BASEBALL. MAYBE IT'S TIME I GOT SERIOUS ABOUT SPLITTIN'...
THE END
22

NEXT: IT'S RAINING PLASTIC MEN!

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

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Dear Doom Patrollers,

Can DC do no wrong? I ask you how is it possible for DC to put out another great comic?! Fine, go ahead with Byrne's SUPERMAN, Perez's WONDER WOMAN, Miller's BATMAN, Giffen's JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL, Ostrander's SUICIDE SQUAD, and Baron's FLASH! It's difficult enough having to decide between them (I don't, I buy *all* of them) now that we have Kupperberg's DOOM PATROL! Now that I have vented some suppressed emotion, I'll get to the serious praise.

This DOOM PATROL is very visibly exciting to watch, and stimulating to read. You guys have accomplished something very rare in comics today, brought back characters that I thought would never be seen again! I'm glad Negative Man, and possibly the Chief, are alive; and also, I'm glad Rita Farr Dayton isn't.

Let me explain. If all would have survived, it would have taken away all that they had stood for! They let themselves be sacrificed for innocent people, true heroes. By keeping Elasti-Girl at rest you certainly let everyone know that no one is above death.

I wish this comic a long, long, long run. You have some great characters to work with; use them to their fullest potential and you have at least one very faithful reader.

Jody Hamby
Route 1, Box 67
Robbins, TN 37852

* * * * *

Dear Patrol Sergeant,

Get out from under that desk. Those howls of agony and or outrage are coming from Kansas City-area comics readers who saw that someone on your team moved good old Metcalf South from Overland Park, Kansas to Overland.

On second thought, get back under there. And lock your doors.

I'll bet some of the loudest bellowing came from Steve Lightle. And after he did such a good job of drawing the exterior and the fountains. It helps to have an artist who knows the subject.

I've heard that will change soon, that Lightle will leave the book within a year. For a replacement, I favor Curt Swan. All he's gotten to do recently is junky toy tie-ins. Give him a REAL book.

Overall, THE DOOM PATROL has grabbed my interest. It's the best writing Paul Kupperberg has done. Whether it will survive the loss of Lightle is up to the fans. But I remain optimistic.

David Schifferdecker
7606 E. 49th St.
Tulsa, OK 74145

We're big Curt Swan fans too, David, and we'll all *be seeing his work on the Roger Stern-scripted Superman serial appearing in ACTION COMICS WEEKLY, starting with issue number 601. And wait until you see who's inking Curt.*

* * * * *

Paul,

DOOM PATROL #4—your Wayne Hawkins is a carbon copy of the break dancer in the late and not-missed phony JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA. We hated him then and now we volunteer to cut him into little pieces with a chain saw. Waste him, kill him, put a bullet right between his eyes!!!

Vincent Harkness
(Address Withheld)
Somerset, PA

C'mon, Vincent. Don't keep those feelings all bottled up inside!

* * * * *

Dear Mike,

DOOM PATROL #4 was one of those nice little transition stories that every title needs once in a while. As such, it provided an excellent chance to observe the various personalities of the team members as well as their initial relationships with each other.

I'm enjoying the way Paul continues to expand each character's personality while simultaneously retaining the theme of the original DOOM PATROL series by portraying them as outcasts from society. One word of advice, though, if you don't start producing some plausible reason for the various heroes to stick around, it's going to quickly become illogical for there to even be a Doom Patrol. At present, each member obviously dislikes him/herself as well as various other teammates, a situation which could quickly become monotonous.

A good example of this is Arani's growing coldness and psychosis ("her" Doom Patrol indeed!). I know I wouldn't want to work with her, much less follow her orders. Similarly, Val's heartlessness toward poor Larry was uncalled for. Although I can sympathize with her not wanting to relinquish her new-found powers and way of life, she could exhibit a little more compassion toward her predecessor.

Speaking of Larry, I implore you to do something about his present condition. Probably my favorite member of any incarnation of the DOOM PATROL, I can't bear to see him in this weak, crippled condition. Please find some way to restore him to his former glory, Paul. I know you can do it. (One question, though. Since his body's no longer inhabited by the energy being, why does he still require protective bandages? Is there still some residual radioactivity left? If so, perhaps he could learn to harness this energy in some way.)

Fortunately, I sense a breath of fresh air. From where? From Rhea Jones, of course. Although I find her origin to be a bit far-fetched (c'mon! Do you really believe a 13-year-old girl could sneak past the front gate of a high security risk base, much less into an electromagnetic emergency in the Arctic? Shades of Firestorm!) I find her powers and character to be very intriguing. In her, we have a first. A Doom Patrol member who actually accepts and (gasp!) even likes her fate. I'm quite anxious to see more of her.

Although we haven't seen much of him yet, Wayne Hawkins has also perked my curiosity. His powers are at least as interesting as Lodestone's, but his actions (theft and possibly even murder) would deem him a better member for the Suicide Squad. Oh, well, at least he'll feel right at home in the Doom Patrol.

Let me finish by saying that you seem to have quite a powerful team, especially once you do something about Larry. (hint! hint!) Overall, an interesting premise with lots of story potential. Go to it!

S. Josvai
330 Elsom
Bradley Hall
University of Wisconsin/Madison
Madison, WI 53706

* * * * *

Dear Paul and Mike,

THE DOOM PATROL #4 still shows the group has potential, but lots of work is needed. The book really feels muddled and weighted down.

The characters are all pretty cool! They just need to get their acts together. If every character in the book is going to get lost in their private problems, the book's never going to survive.

The individuals need to focus on the team, so the team can have direction.

Rhea is beautiful, so please get her

out of that horrible costume! She needs something pink/purple with less lines.

Jeff Mitchell
1794 W. Minnehaha
St. Paul, MN 55104

* * * * *

Dear Comic Sages,

I never thought I would ever be writing anything vaguely resembling a negative (no offense, Larry!) letter to the DOOM PATROL, but such is life. I was very disappointed with DOOM PATROL #4. I know that it is very hard to keep up your high standards issue after issue, but you've only put out four issues! What happened? Since you probably think that you put out a perfect book, I guess that I'll have to enlighten you.

First of all, what happened to the great artwork that had been gracing the pages of this comic? This did not look at all like the quality work that Steve Lightle usually turns out. Heck, most of the comic didn't even look like his artwork. My theory is that Steve either was ill or was busy with something else, and that somebody else took over the art chores. He wasn't given any credit because it was too late to add it to the book. Right?

And my other beef? What was wrong with the cast that you already have? Here in issue #4 you add two new members. Why? You have a perfectly good cast as it is. If you keep adding new members, you're going to wind up with a static, boring title! We don't need them! If you've added them for interesting conflicts, you've already got that with Arani and the others, Val and Larry, and Cliff Steele and the whole world.

And this Wayne Hawkins loser! I know you want to reinforce the outcast theme to this book, but you don't need this loser! Tell me, oh please, tell me this is not the shape of things to come!! Hawkins reminds me of that lousy excuse for a hero that the JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA used to have, Vibe. Let's hope Wayne follows Vibe's example.

I'm extremely disappointed with the efforts put forth in #4. It worries me greatly that the possibility exists that if this keeps up, I could be dropping this title in the near future. You don't want that; I don't want that. The only things that saved this issue were pages 1-3, 9, and 10. That's only 23% satisfaction. Unacceptable.

Kip Talbott
P.O. Box 206
Dayton, VA 22821

There's some sizable controversy about the new characters—and the old. Some people like the new members, others hate them ... some wish we hadn't brought back Larry, others only want to see the original team. For example...

* * * * *

Mike,

I've been a comic reader for close to 15 of my 20 years. I've been fascinated by the Doom Patrol for a long time.

The opener to the series with Kalki was aces with me. It held my interest and made me eagerly await next month.

However, with the bringing together of the characters who will obviously form the new Doom Patrol, I begin to lose interest. It begins to resemble (oh, shades of disaster) the ex-crummy JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA.

Arani being a hardcase is sheer stupidity. You can't seem to keep it straight whether she's an Indian as on page 4 of #4, or if she is white as in the circles at the end of the story. I don't see Arani as a strong enough character to lead the Doom Patrol. She definitely should remain with the group but I just cannot see her as the leader.

Joshua is obviously going to develop into the Dale Gunn of the ex-JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA. Lodestone shows promise but unless the book garners its following on more than just the legacy of the Doom Patrol, I don't think it'll stand a chance. She doesn't need to be the Steel of the Doom Patrol. Don't use her up and then kill her off just because the series can't make it.

Val is my choice for leader. For one thing, you need someone leading who doesn't show a predilection for carrying out vendettas. When first Arani gathered the new Doom Patrol, it was to fight General Immortus; actually more like protect her from him. She dragged them into the Jamaican affair with Kalki although that did yield Larry Trainor and brought the group back together.

Hawkins should prove interesting. Isn't he a little bit close to one of the competition's characters, though? I'm not talking about the obvious which would be Longshot; I mean Roulette of the Hellfire Club. All the way down to the shaped wheels he leaves behind. He is just a little bit too much like Vibe for my tastes.

On the whole, I think if you folks don't come up with some really killer villains you can kiss this enthusiast goodbye.

Jacques Daniels
10 Wolters
Lake Dallas, TX

* * * * *

Dear Patrol People,

I love THE DOOM PATROL. The thing I love most about it is the artwork. Please, whatever it takes, get Steve Lightle to come back. Erik Larsen is okay, but he is a tad too cartoony for the Patrol. They need Steve's realism. The guy is slow but he's good ... no, he's great. Get him back.

Gretchen A. Day
910 Hamilton St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20011-3928

* * * * *

Dear DC,

If you continue writing this comic the way you have been I'm going to keep buying it and I'm sure others will, too. I've loved everything about it so far, but if there's any one thing I've really enjoyed about it, it has to be the characters.

Celsius' power over both heat and cold makes her very unique. There's no one who is even remotely similar to her.

I like Negative Woman because of her superhuman strength, a trait which is normally given to men. Women superheroes tend to be acrobatic and rely on a lot of silly gimmicks. That isn't the case with Valentina Vostok.

Tempest is my favorite character. For some reason, I've always admired guys who could shoot energy blasts from their hands.

Robotman is fantastic, too. As far as I can see, he seems to be the only Patroller with a sense of humor. I sure hope that isn't true!

If the group can find room for Captain Comet and Solomon Grundy, that would be terrific. Then again, a comic packed with a bunch of mutants—do you think it would sell? I think it would be X-cellent!

Chris Miller
Box 118
Hinton, Alberta
CANADA T0E 1B0

* * * * *

Dear Paul,

"Trouble in Kansas City" (#4) was great. The artwork by Steve Lightle/Gary Martin works well. Lightle draws a powerful cover. I like the way you didn't forget about the original Doom Patrol headquarters before debuting the new one. Since Cliffe Steele doesn't like Robotman, how about calling himself "Steele"? Rhea Jones/Wayne Hawkins made sure that you won't forget them. I can't wait to learn what Rhea was like during her circus period. I was glad that Larry Trainor didn't disappear after the last issue. It will be interesting to see how he will be able to rebuild his life again.

I hope that it will be Wayne Hawkins' turn for his origin to be told. I hope that the Doom Patrol will encounter the Teen Titans real soon. I hope that you use some old-time villains. Good luck.

Charles David Haskell
15 W. 139th St., Apt. 4R
New York, NY 10037

* * * * *

NEXT MONTH: From out of the past comes ... Garguax and his army of Plastiomen—bringing destruction to Kansas City ... and the Doom Patrol.

—Mike Gold